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MESSAGE

OF

ROBT. B. LINDSAY,

Governor of Alabama.

SENATE, December 12, 1870.—2500 copies ordered printed.

STATE OF ALABAMA,

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,

November 29, 1870.

Gentlemen of the Senate and House of Representatives:

It is with pleasure I avail myself of the privilege vested in me by the Constitution of the State, to communicate with the Legislative Department of the Government. Although on the very threshold of your high and important duties you have encountered a remarkable and anomalous condition of public affairs, I cherish the pleasing hope that present embarrassing circumstances will soon yield to the combined spirit of patriotism and of reason. It is to be deeply regretted that the high character Alabama obtained among her sister States, by the peace, order and tranquillity which characterized our recent general election, should be impaired by the untoward events of the past few days; but I fondly trust that by your wisdom and prudence the malignant influences of a few misguided men will be speedily and effectually counteracted. In all you may do to secure a result so desirable, you will receive my earnest and diligent co-operation. Coming recently from your homes and constituencies, it is scarcely necessary for me to remind you of the depression which pervades the business and industries of the country. A benignant Providence has, it is true, blessed the land with genial seasons, and rewarded the labors of the husbandman with a bountiful harvest; yet the unfortunate, sanguinary war, now exhausting the resources of two great European nations, has had a disastrous effect upon American commerce, especially upon the prices of the chief and most valuable product of our fields. It, therefore, behooves the

Government to relieve the tax-payers of the State to the utmost extent possible and expedient. Our present system of taxation is offensive and burdensome to the masses, and the mode of its enforcement oppressive. The instincts of the popular heart seldom err—the complaints of the people are the surest evidence of the wrong and injustice of any law. To a review and modification of our entire system of taxation, I therefore invite your earliest and earnest consideration, that its burdens may be lightened and thereby rendered more acceptable to the people. A suspension of the enforcement of the penalty incurred by delinquents would afford immediate and desirable relief, by enabling our small farmers to postpone the sale of their few, but hard earned cotton bales at great sacrifice.

There are other important matters, of public policy, to which at a future time I will take the liberty of inviting your consideration, deeming it eminently proper to withhold my views thereon for the present.

ROBT. B. LINDSAY.